prior written agreement of the Maritime Subsidy Board as to number of replacement vessels, type and commercial characteristics, projected award date of construction contract, projected delivery dates, estimated total cost (current) and method used to determine such cost, intended area of operation, and identity of vessels to be replaced.

(3) Capitalized Lease Obligations as defined in § 283.2(b), excluding that portion of any such amount payable within one year; and

(4) Outstanding indebtedness on, or secured by, subsidized vessels and related barges and containers, or incurred in connection with the acquisition, construction or reconstruction of such vessels and related barges and containers.

§ 283.3 Dividend policy criteria.

(a) *In general.* A subsidized operator may pay cash dividends at any time it desires up to the amount set forth in paragraph (b) of this section. Dividends may be paid pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section, as provided therein. The written approval of the Maritime Administrator shall be obtained prior to any declaration of dividends by the operator, if the payment of dividends does not meet the criteria of either paragraph (b) or (c) of this section. It is intended that dividend payments be permitted under the provisions of either paragraph (b) or (c), whichever allows payment of the greatest amount of dividends. Nothing in this part shall alter restrictions on the payment of dividends which may affect the operator under any other agreements with the Maritime Administrator.

(b) *40 percent dividend criteria*—If the operator is able to meet the criteria of this paragraph after declaration and payment of the proposed dividend, it may declare a dividend of up to 40 percent of prior years' earnings, less any dividends that were paid in such years, unless there is an operating loss in the fiscal year to the date of proposed payment of dividend, as well as operating losses in the immediately preceding two years. If in any of the years included in the prior years' earnings calculation dividends were paid under the 100 percent rule, those years' earnings

and dividends may be excluded from the prior years' earnings calculation, and then only the earnings and dividends associated with the remaining years of the three year period may be used. This provision enables an operator to pay dividends under the 40 percent rule when in past years it has paid dividends under the 100 percent rule. The criteria which must be satisfied are as follows:

(1) *Working Capital*—Working Capital must equal or exceed one dollar.

(2) *Long-term Debt to Equity ratio*—Long-Term Debt must not exceed two times Equity. (The Maritime Administrator may modify this requirement during periods of vessel construction).

(3) *Net Worth Floor*—Net Worth must exceed the adjusted net worth floor as computed in § 283.2.

(c) An operator may declare a dividend in an amount up to 100 percent of retained earnings, unless there is an operating loss in the fiscal year to the date of proposed payment of dividend, as well as operating losses in the immediately preceding two years, if the following criteria are satisfied:

(1) *Working Capital*—Working Capital must equal or exceed one dollar.

(2) *Long-Term Debt to Equity ratio*—Long-Term debt must not exceed Equity.

(3) *Net Worth Floor*—Net worth must exceed the Adjusted Net Worth floor as computed in § 283.2.

(4) *Funding for Replacement Vessels*—Funds available must exceed Funds Required, and the basis for Funds Required for replacement vessels must receive prior approval, as provided in § 283.2(i) herein.

§ 283.4 Alternate standards.

(a) The Maritime Administrator may waive or modify any of the financial terms or requirements otherwise applicable in part 283, upon determining that other factors exist which make alternate terms or requirements appropriate. An example of such a situation would involve an operator that: (1) Has no replacement obligation and (2) has a guarantee of charter hire or other guarantees sufficient to cover capital costs. In such cases, the Government's interest may be sufficiently protected although the operator cannot meet the